4: Stannus D-5 (ca. 1909) 1910 FT7 Yao FT7 Marovi FR4

case *masasi* might be administered; if adjudged guilty the accused would be burned on a pile of wood. M 695

Evidence is given without taking any oath; a false witness is not punished. M 696

Justice is occasionally summary. At Mponda's, after conviction of adultery with one of the chief's wives, a man's throat was cut on the spot. Drowning was the usual punishment with Mponda.

Punishments for all offences practically meant payment.

CUSTOMS, SALUTATIONS, ETC.

The correct salutation among Machinga Yao and Mañanja on meeting is clapping the hands, the hands in front of and at right angles to the body parallel to each other, thumbs against the fingers. The clapping should be continued for ten minutes after having passed; after passing a chief it should be continued for half-an-hour. M Y 576

Another form consists in slowly beating the breast with the right hand, the head slightly inclined forward. The lower in station makes salutation first to the higher, a man to a chief, a woman to a man; exception is made in the case of an old woman, who is saluted by the man. Scattered all over the country a raising of one or both arms is a common form of salutation, but is probably only a corruption of the military salute. M Y [554] [888]

Slapping of the nates or thigh with the right hand is also seen, among old men usually. In imploring mercy from, or on the first occasion of meeting, the chief, a man lies prone on the ground and catching the foot of the chief, puts it on his neck—a sign of absolute submission. Women kneel at the approach of a man. Words and expressions of salutation are few—*Moyo* (=heart) being the only old expression used. Now commonly one hears a word (sounding like *mōnē*) probably a corruption of good morning, and the Swahili greeting *Sukuári* with the double hand-shake of Mohammedans. M Y [201] [562] [177]

A man returned to his village after an absence rests awhile, then his wife comes to him and kneeling greets him, *moyo*, her husband returning *moyo*.

Years ago, a man of any importance was received with firing of guns and shouting. A headman is received now with *Ntungululu*, the women wobbling their tongues in their mouths. Ashes are put on the head as a sign of joy. M Y [152]

In the morning the husband and wife do not greet each other, but in the village friends "give each other good morning" (=*Moyo*). On waking in the morning, a woman cracks all her joints (=*Kulima chala*). She then massages her husband and cracks the joints of his fingers. M Y [512] [576]

One man wishing to see another goes to his house, and squatting outside the door cries "*Icho!*" three times (=there), at the same time clapping his hands. If no answer be given he goes away, even though he knows the man is within, no answer meaning that the inmate does not wish to be seen. If invited to enter he does so, the man of the house rises and gives him salutation. He makes small M 574 576

6: Mitchell E-5 (1946-1947) 1949 FT7 Yao FT7

be noted that only 27—11 per cent. of the whole sample of 246 women—had never married and that 23, 80 per cent., of these (or 10 per cent. of the total) were under the age of 20 and therefore stood a good chance of yet marrying. Furthermore, 2 of the 4 women over 20 who had not married were known definitely to be incapable of marrying (one is insane and the other has violent epileptic fits).

There were 53 women who were divorcees or widows (21·5 per cent.), but it should be noted that 27 (or 11 per cent. of the 246 women) were over the age of 45 and therefore were past, or nearly past, the child-bearing period. Those in the younger age-groups stood good chances of remarrying. Table IV shows that though the divorce rate is high[1] remarriage is common. By the time a woman's child-bearing period has ended she has been married on the average 1·7 times. Few marriages are contracted after child-bearing ceases.

TABLE IV. *Marriages and Dissolutions of Marriage experienced by all Women over the Age of 15*

Present age	*No. of women*	*No. of marriages contracted*	*No. of divorces experienced*	*No. widowed*	*No. still married*	*No. of marriages per woman*	*No. of divorces per woman*	*No. of marriages per woman ended by death of husband*	*No. of marriages per woman still existing*
15–20	43	22	1	..	21	0·49	0·02	0·00	0·46
20–30	79	104	36	4	64	1·32	0·45	0·05	0·81
30–45	70	121	30	16	55	1·73	0·71	0·23	0·79
Over 45	52	88	19	34	25	1·70	0·37	0·65	0·48
Total	246	335	116	54	165	1·36	0·47	0·22	0·67

These statistics, showing the early age of marriage, the early commencement of child-bearing, the high incidence of marriage among women, and the high rate of remarriage during the child-bearing period, all point to the high valuation of reproduction reflected in Yao culture. This is consistent with their social structure, where the major corporate groups are kinship groups and reproduction is the principal method of recruitment to the group. Furthermore, because the standard of living is almost at subsistence level, children do not entail the economic losses they do in Western society. On the other hand, they are expected to support their aged parents when they themselves are economically independent. In other words, there are few factors militating against reproduction and many in favour of it.

We may expect the beliefs and customs surrounding child-birth to reflect the value of reproduction. For instance, the Yao distinguish clearly between women who have borne children and those who have not. When a girl becomes pregnant for the first time she undergoes a special ceremony (*litiśo*) attended only by women who have borne children. This ceremony has many of the features of a *rite de passage* and appears to mark the passing of the woman to a new social status. Furthermore, women are ascribed status according to the number of children they have borne. The word *awwali* signifies a young woman who has not yet borne a child; *awwali*

[1] Between a third and a half of the marriages contracted by women had been dissolved by divorce by the time that the child-bearing period had ended.